

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

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INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

S E C R E T BRASILIA 0980

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, MOPS, CU, AO, BR

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTRY VIEWS ON ANGOLA: CUBAN INTERVENTION,
BRAZILIAN PRESENCE

REF: STATE 011313

1. WHEN APPROACHED ABOUT CONSULTATIONS PER REFTTEL, OFFICER OF
FOREIGN MINISTER'S CABINET CHARGED WITH POLITICAL AFFAIRS UNDER-
TOOK TO CHECK WITH FONMIN, AND SUBSEQUENTLY
CALLED IN EMBOFF TO DELIVER FOLLOWING VIEWS:

A. CUBA IS IN ANGOLA NOT BECAUSE OF ITS OWN AUTONOMOUS
WILL BUT BECAUSE THE USSR ORDERED IT. CUBA IS COMPLYING WITH
ITS MISSION AS A SATELLITE, AND WOULD ENGAGE IN SIMILAR
ACTIVITIES ELSEWHERE--ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD--IF THE USSR SO
ORDERED. THUS (CONFIRMING EMBOFF'S SUGGESTION) THE KEY TO
A CUBAN WITHDRAWAL LIES IN MOSCOW.

B. THE BRAZILIAN PRESENCE IN ANGOLA HAS NO IDEOLOGICAL
BASIS. BRAZIL IS OPPOSED TO CUBA AND TO THE LIFTING OF
SANCTIONS AGAINST CUBA, AND ABSTAINED RATHER THAN FIGHT

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AGAINST SUCH A LIFTING ONLY BECAUSE IT THOUGHT OTHER

COUNTRIES SHOULD BE ABLE TO LEGALIZE THEIR SITUATIONS.

C. THAT BRAZILIAN PRESENCE RATHER IS PART OF BRAZIL'S OVERALL DETERMINATION TO BE PRESENT IN ALL OF PORTUGAL'S FORMER AFRICAN TERRITORIES. THAT DETERMINATION, IN TURN, REFLECTS THE FACT THAT BRAZIL IS (OR CAN BE) WHAT NO OTHER COUNTRY CAN BE FOR THOSE TERRITORIES. THAT PRESENCE IS NOT DETERMINED BY OR SUBJECT TO OTHER FACTORS (SUCH AS THE IDEOLOGY OF THE HOST GOVERNMENT), AND COULD SERVE THE USEFUL FUNCTION OF KEEPING OPEN A DOOR TO THE WEST WHEN OTHER WESTERN DOORS HAVE BEEN CLOSED; BRAZIL HOPES TO EXERT A MODERATING INFLUENCE.

D. WHILE MUCH HAS BEEN MADE OF THE MARXIST NATURE OF THE MPLA, IN IMPLIED (AT LEAST) CONTRAST TO THE OTHER TWO GROUPS, IN FACT ALL THREE GROUPS ARE MARXIST, AND IN THE PAST ALL THREE GROUPS RECEIVED ASSISTANCE FROM MOSCOW. (AS FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT THE US IS NOT REALLY BOTHERED BY THE MARXIST ANGLE,) THE US ESTABLISHED RELATIONS BEFORE BRAZIL WITH THE MARXIST GOVERNMENT IN MOZAMBIQUE. THERE, OF COURSE, THERE WAS ONLY ONE FACTION.

E. (ON THE BASIS THAT THE REAL PROBLEM IS A SOVIET PRESENCE IN ANGOLA,) A SOVIET PRESENCE AND ANY SECURITY THREAT IT MAY REPRESENT WOULD BE THE US', NOT BRAZIL'S, PROBLEM. (ASKED AT WHAT POINT AN EXPANSION OF THE SOVIET WORLD PRESENCE WOULD BE A PROBLEM FOR BRAZIL,) SUCH A POINT WOULD BE REACHED FOR THE US BEFORE IT WOULD FOR BRAZIL. EVIDENTLY THE ANGOLA SITUATION DOES NOT REPRESENT SUCH A POINT FOR THE US: IF IT DID, THE CONGRESS' BLOCKING ACTION WOULD NOT HAVE STOPPED THE EXECUTIVE.

F. (DISCOUNTING THE IDEA THAT ANGOLA WILL BECOME A SOVIET SATELLITE BUT ACKNOWLEDGING THAT NETO WAS RUNNING UP A DEBT WITH THE SOVIETS,) IT IS NATURAL FOR AN AFRICAN INDEPENDENCE LEADER TO ACCEPT INDEBTEDNESS IF IT IS THE PRICE OF SURVIVAL. WHILE SUCH AN INDEBTEDNESS IS NOT NECESSARILY BINDING, IT IS NEVERTHELESS INCUMBENT ON THE US AND OTHER WESTERN POWERS TO SEEK TO LIMIT NETO'S INDEBTEDNESS.

2. COMMENT: THIS EXPOSITIO OF FOREIGN MINISTRY VIEWS INCLUDES FOUR CHARACTERISTIC ELEMENTS: (A) IDEA OF SOVIET UNION AS SOLE MASTER OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT (WHICH HELPS EXPLAIN LACK OF INTEREST DEMONSTRATED IN PURELY CUBAN SECRET

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MOTIVATION); (B) CONTINUING SENSITIVITY (INCLUDING STREAK OF DEFENSIVENESS) OVER BRAZILIAN RECOGNITION OF MPLA (WHICH ALSO HELPS EXPLAIN RAPIDITY WITH WHICH OFFICIAL SHIFTED FROM CUBAN TO BRAZILIAN POLICY); (C) FAILURE TO ACCEPT FULLY REALITY OF CHECKS AND BALANCES IN US POLITICAL SYSTEM; AND (D) ASSERTION, WHICH IN PART SELF-SERVING BUT WHICH AT LEAST SOME MINISTRY OFFICIALS APPEAR TO BELIEVE, THAT FORCE OF AFRICAN NATIONALISM WILL PREVENT SOVIETS FROM REAPING

CONCRETE REWARDS FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE TO MPLA. WE NOTE THAT SIGNS CONTINUE HERE THAT OTHER PARTS OF GOB, PARTICULARLY MILITARY, ARE NOT SO SANGUINE REGARDING PROSPECT OF ESTABLISHMENT OF SOVIET PRESENCE IN ANGOLA, AND THAT THEY APPEAR TO CONSIDER SUCH PRESENCE WOULD INDEED BE PROBLEM FOR BRAZIL, NOT JUST FOR US.

3. AMBASSADOR WILL BE TALKING TO FOREIGN MINISTER SILVEIRA ABOUT THIS SUBJECT BUT EXPECTS NO SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES FROM THE FOREGOING VIEWS WHICH, AS INDICATED, HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH SILVEIRA.
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